

REMARKS BY  
BY  
WILLIAM H. WEBSTER  
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE  
BEFORE THE  
STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE  
INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT AND POLICY PROJECT  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
APRIL 5, 1989

I don't know about the rest of you, but this has been the nicest part of my day.

I was taken by a remark that Dick Walters made when he said the American people are ambivalent about intelligence.\* When they feel threatened they want a lot of it, and when they're not threatened, they think it's somehow immoral. This is the atmosphere in which we live as intelligence collectors and analysts providing information. I have been enormously enthusiastic about the process by which Harvard University and the Kennedy School of Government and the Central Intelligence Agency found their way together for this project. I think it says something about how the American people feel about intelligence these days, that a public announcement of this project met with so little articulated opposition and, indeed, that some saw tremendous opportunities for gain in what we were doing.

I was saying to Graham earlier that if the Intelligence Community wanted to better understand the process by which their intelligence was translated into policy, if we shouldn't go to Harvard, where else should we go?\*\* It has proven to be an eminently worthwhile undertaking for us, as I hope it has been for those in the academic community who have participated with us.

\*General Vernon Walters, former Deputy Director of Central Intelligence and former Ambassador to the United Nations.

\*\*Graham Allison, Dean of the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, and Cochairman of the Steering Committee for the Intelligence Assessment and Policy Project.

At this dinner in December of 1987, we agreed that we had to go back in our discussions and find old cases. And I know that the process has included the fall of the Shah, Marcos, and the INF Treaty and I have been thinking, "My God, I was here for all of that!"

I've been watching this new Administration gear up to review national security issues and to see whether the policies under which we have been living -- some defined and some poorly defined -- are still viable in the light of the information we're now getting.

It's been an interesting exercise, and I suspect that Bob Gates would have been here tonight, but for the fact that they've been having these meetings on a daily basis. Dick Kerr and I have been fortunate to split our time between those meetings and something else important, such as our budget session this afternoon.

One of the points that has become clear to me is this Administration's intense interest in current intelligence. And that puts an extra burden on a lot of our analysts who, for a variety of reasons, don't trust the first round of developments and want to see and understand the significance of the intelligence that is coming in on a daily basis.

I think that while that is true, our President has had enough experience in our community to understand the first round is not necessarily definitive about what actually happened. And I think that his pride in the Intelligence Community and his relationship to it has had a big impact on our ability to

talk about intelligence, where it fits into the picture, and how it contributes to effective policymaking.

I could talk on at length about some of the things that we do to make sure that intelligence does not seem to be in pursuit of an objective of our own but rather is timely, useful, and objective. But I won't do that because I want to hear from Graham and Professor May. But I want to thank all of you who have contributed so much to support this effort. I think that in the future it will reap rich benefits for us. I know that Lenny Perroots, Bill Odom, Dave Jones and many of the others who have stepped away from active participation in this process have high hopes for it, as I do. Thank you.